

Notes & News

Rare and Little-Known Opisthobranch Mollusks from the West Coast of North America

by

JOAN E. STEINBERG

San Francisco, California

In August, 1960, I visited the University of Washington Laboratories at Friday Harbor, Washington, to obtain information to be included in a key to the Opisthobranchs of the West Coast of North America covering the region from Southern California to Vancouver Island (The Veliger, in press). At that time I was presented with a single specimen of a nudibranch which was assumed by the collectors to be Corambe pacifica MacFarland and O'Donoghue, 1929. Upon closer examination, however, it proved to be a member of the genus Corambella Balch, 1899. Heretofore, no species of Corambella have been reported from this area. Until further material is available, it is advisable to designate this form as Corambella sp. It was reported to occur on floating brown kelp in association with the bryozoan Membranipora.

Three other opisthobranchs which have not been described before, at least from the areas in which they were collected, are worthy of note. A member of the family Philinoglossidae (order Acochlideacea) occurs in the alga Endocladia on the rocks north of Dillon Beach, Marin County, California. No other representatives of this peculiar order have been reported from the West Coast of North America.

A small species of the genus Okenia has been collected at Berkeley Yacht Harbor and at Palo Alto Yacht Harbor and has been dredged near Point Richmond, all in San Francisco Bay. Okenia vancouverensis (O'Donoghue, 1921) is the only member of this genus described from the West Coast of North America, but on the basis of external characters it is markedly different from the California species. Until further work is done, the animals from California are best designated as Okenia sp.

The small cuthonid eolid nudibranch, occasionally abundant on campanularid hydroids in San Francisco Bay and Monterey Bay, has been known locally as Embletonia sp. Alder and Hancock, 1851. However, it belongs to the genus Tenellia A. Costa, 1866, but until the detailed anatomy of its reproductive system is worked out, its exact relationship to other species in this genus cannot be determined.

Range Extension and Synonymy for *Mitra nigra* (SCHRÖTER, 1788)

by

JEAN M. CATE

Conchological Club of Southern California,
Los Angeles 7, California

A major range extension for Mitra nigra (Schröter, 1788) was brought to light by the September 1959 deep-water dredgings of the Pele Expedition in Hawaii. A single live specimen was dredged on a coral and sand bottom from 75 fathoms in Keehi Lagoon, Oahu (21°N. Lat., 157°W. Long.). Although the outer lip of this specimen had been badly broken, it was in the process of repair by the mollusk and enough of the shell remains in perfect condition to make possible a positive identification of the species.

Mitra nigra has previously been recorded from Tasmania, from New South Wales, and from various localities in New Zealand (Suter, 1913; Iredale, 1931; Allan, 1950; Cotton, 1957, 1959), from the island of Anaa in the south Pacific Ocean (Dautzenberg and Bouge, 1933), and (questionably) from "Guinea, India and Greenland" (Reeve, 1844). India can apparently be disregarded as a valid locality, as M. nigra is not represented in the collection of shells in the Indian Museum at Calcutta, although beach-worn specimens of a very similar species, Vicimitra prosphora Iredale, 1929, are recorded there from Bombay, Karachi, and the Persian Gulf (Ray, 1954). It has not been previously recorded from Hawaii, either living or fossil, in any of the available references from that area (Garrett, 1880; Pilsbry, 1920; Ostergaard, 1928; Edmondson, 1946; Bryan, 1956, 1958; Tinker, 1958).

Among the reliable localities of record, Anaa in the Tuamotu Archipelago, 3,000 statute miles southeast of Hawaii, is the closest approach to the recently discovered collecting station on Oahu. To the nearest degree, this results in a range extension of approximately 44 degrees of longitude westward and 11 degrees of latitude northward.

Discounting Reeve's unverified records of this species from Guinea and Greenland, Mitra nigra still remains one of the widest-ranging species of this genus known. Its center of population is apparently South Australia, where it is spoken of as "common" (Cotton, July 1960 personal communication).

Mitra nigra has undergone many changes in nomenclature since its first description by Chemnitz in 1788, subsequently validated by Schröter in the same year. The synonymy follows:

- 1788 Voluta nigra
Chemnitz, Conch. Cab., X, p. 168, pl. 151, fig. 1430, 1431.
- 1788 Voluta nigra Chemnitz
Schröter, Namen Register, p. 115.
- 1822 Mitra carbonaria
Swainson, Bligh Catalogue, Ex. Conch. App.
- 1822 Mitra melaniana
Lamarck, Anim. s. Vert., VII, p. 314.
- 1844 Mitra nigra Chemnitz
Reeve, Conch. Icon., pl. 5, f. 33.
- 1844 Mitra badia
Reeve, Conch. Icon., pl. 20, f. 157 (Juvenile of M. nigra).
- 1854 Volutomitra digna
A. Adams, Zool. Proc., p. 135.
- 1882 Mitra melaniana Lamarck
Tryon, Man. Conch., IV, p. 127, pl. 37, fig. 118.
- 1931 Vicimitra contermina
Iredale, Rec. Austr. Mus., 1936, Vol. 19, pl. 4, fig. 15.

I particularly wish to thank Clifton S. Weaver of Honolulu for the opportunity to identify and study this shell from the Pele Expedition; Mrs. Thelma Hartley of Melbourne for her help in tracing some of the Australian references, and Mr. and Mrs. John Q. Burch for access to their reference collection and library.

LITERATURE CITED

- Allan, Joyce
1950. Australian shells, Georgian House, Melbourne. 470 pp., 44 pls., p. 182.
- Bryan, Edwin H., Jr.
1956. Check list of Hawaiian Miters. Hawaiian Shell News, vol. 4, no. 4, pp. 38-39.
- _____, _____
1959. Provisional check list of Gastropods recorded from the Hawaiian chain. No. 33, Mitridae; *ibid.*, vol. 7, no. 12, supp. pp. 23-28.
- Cotton, Bernard C.
1957. Family Mitridae. Roy. Soc. So. Austr. publ. no. 12, p. 3.
- _____, _____
1959. South Australian Mollusca: Archaeogastropoda. Hawes, Adelaide, 449 pp., 1 pl., p. 306.
- Dautzenberg and Bouge
1933. Les mollusques testacés marins des établissements français de l'Océanie. Journ. de Conchyliologie, vol. 77, no. 2, p. 178.
- Edmondson, Charles H.
1946. Reef and shore fauna of Hawaii. B. P. B. Mus. Spec. Publ. No. 22; Honolulu, 381 pp., p. 128.
- Garrett, Andrew H.
1880. On Polynesian Mitridae. Journ. Conch., vol. 3, pp. 3-8.
- Iredale, Tom
1936. Australian molluscan notes. No. 2, Rec. Austr. Mus., vol. 19, pp. 267-340; pl. 20-24; p. 320.
- Ostergaard, Jens M.
1928. Fossil marine mollusks of Oahu. B. P. B. Mus. Bull. No. 51, pp. 1-32.
- Pilsbry, Henry A.
1920. Marine mollusks of Oahu. Proc. Acad. Nat. Sci. Phil., vol. 72, pp. 309-318.
- Ray, H. C.
1954. Mitres of Indian waters. Mem. Indian Mus., vol. XIV, no. 1, Calcutta.
- Reeve, Lovell
1844. Conchologia Iconica, pl. 5, sp. 33; pl. 20, sp. 157.
- Schröter
1788. Namen Register, p. 115.
- Suter, Henry
1913. A manual of New Zealand mollusca. Mackay, Wellington, 1120 pp., pl. 46; p. 361.

Tinker, Spencer W.

1958. Pacific seashells. Charles E. Tuttle Co., Rutland, 240 pp.; pp. 140-160.

Tryon, George W., Jr.

1882. Manual of conchology. vol. 4, p. 127, pl. 37.

Available: All Backnumbers of THE VELIGER

Because of the continued demand for complete sets of backnumbers of our journal, and because the supply of some numbers is either completely exhausted or nearly so, we have produced a second printing of the numbers in question. They are clearly marked as such by a red imprint. However, once the supply of the second printing is exhausted, it will be impossible to produce any further copies. As long as the new supply lasts we will be able to furnish complete sets of the *Veliger* at the previously announced rates, namely:

volume 1, complete: \$1.09 including postage

volume 2, complete: \$2.24 including postage

There is added a handling charge of 25 cents to each order.

DEPARTMENT OF LIVING INVERTEBRATES NEWLY ESTABLISHED AT THE AMERICAN MUSEUM

The American Museum of Natural History recently announced the re-establishment of the Department of Living Invertebrates. The department had been de-activated since World War II. Responsible for Recent Invertebrates, exclusive of Insects, the staff of the department includes: Dr. William K. Emerson, Chairman and Malacologist; Dr. Dorothy E. Bliss, Invertebrate Physiologist; Dr. Meredith L. Jones, specialist in Lower Invertebrates, Dr. H. E. Coomans, Research Fellow in Malacology; Frederic V. Weir and William E. Old, Jr. technical assistants; and Mrs. William Fish, secretary. Drs. Libbie H. Hyman, Horace W. Stunkard, and William J. Clench (Harvard University) are Research Associates.

The collection of mollusks at the American Museum, although of considerable historical

importance, dates from the early acquisition of the J. C. Jay collection. It was without a curator until the appointment of Dr. Emerson in 1955. At present, the collection contains more than 80,000 catalogued lots and is being rearranged by Dr. Coomans, with the able assistance of Mr. Old, according to a modern classification. The work of Dr. Coomans, who studied under Mrs. W. S. S. van der Feen-Van Benthem Jutting at the Amsterdam Museum and formerly was associated with the Caribbean Marine Biological Institute at Curaçao, is being sponsored by a grant from the National Science Foundation. Bill Old, an avid student of conchology, will handle a newly organized exchange program.

In Preparation

It is expected that on or about December 1, 1960, the Northern California Malacozoological Club will publish a supplement to volume 3 of the *Veliger*. This supplement will be devoted to the opisthobranch mollusks of the west coast of North America. The first section, by Professor and Mrs. Marcus, includes the description of 12 new species from California as well as a thorough discussion of 38 additional species from the same area. This portion of the supplement is illustrated with 199 line drawings on ten full-page plates (the format is the same as that adopted for the *Veliger* itself). The second section is a key to all known opisthobranch mollusks from Southern California to Washington. Line drawings will be used freely to clarify important diagnostic characters. A glossary pertaining to the "special language" will form a third section. Miss Joan Steinberg will be responsible for these latter two sections. An extensive and comprehensive bibliography is appended to the first and second section, respectively.

The supplement will be available to subscribers to the *Veliger* at the reduced rate of \$1.50 plus postage. Only one copy can be supplied at this price to each subscriber. Additional copies may be obtained at \$3. — plus postage, the price at which the supplement will be generally available. California residents please add 4% sales tax. Make checks payable to N. C. M. C. and mail to Mrs. Phoebe Balch, 975 Hough Avenue, Lafayette, California. (Probable mailing weight will be between $1\frac{1}{4}$ and $1\frac{1}{2}$ pounds.)